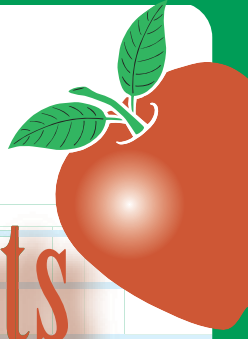




Healthier Environments



that Support Physical Activity and Healthy Eating in Michigan Schools

Forty-seven Michigan schools between 1999 and 2004 received \$1,000 in grant funds from the Michigan Departments of Education and Community Health to make changes to their school environment. The results were fantastic.... at 38 schools a total of 177 changes were made with an average of 4.7 changes per school! Now, 21,118 students have improved policies, programs and/or environments to support them in eating healthier, being more active and living tobacco free lives!

How did the schools accomplish this? They formed Coordinated School Health Teams, completed the School Health Index or Healthy School Action Tool and made one or more changes to provide students with opportunities to eat healthy, be physically active and live tobacco-free lives. Some changes were small (like moving healthy items to the “front” of the lunch line) and others were huge (like hiring another PE teacher). If you are interested in completing the HSAT and implementing changes at your school, visit www.mihealthtools.org ★ for more information and additional resources.

Tips From Successful Schools!

Each of these suggestions was implemented by at least one school that received a grant. Use this list for ideas on how you can improve the physical activity and nutrition environment at your school:

INCREASE HEALTHY FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Offer more fruits and vegetables:

- Add fresh fruit to cereal for breakfast
- Add more variety of fruits and veggies to the salad bar
- Increase the number of days the salad bar is offered
- Include the salad bar with the school meal

Reduce the fat:

- Bake chicken nuggets
- Remove fryer from the cafeteria
- Decrease the number of days that fries are served

Offer healthier á la carte items:

- Offer a daily healthy snack to every student for \$5/month.
- Gradually remove non-nutritious items like candy, cookies and chips from the á la carte line
- Decrease size of cookies sold in á la carte line

Healthy vending:

- Purchase a juice or milk machine (or both) to replace the pop machine
- Provide lower fat milk in the milk vending machine
- Add bottled water to the pop machine
- Replace the pop logo on the front of the vending machine with a graphic of water or juice
- Turn off the pop machine during school hours
- Purchase a snack machine and have a school class stock it with healthy choices as a project

Involve students in decision-making:

- Have students participate in taste testing to help you decide what foods to offer for school meals
- Use a short survey for student input on healthy foods for á la carte or vending

Offer healthy fundraisers

- Use healthy foods for fundraisers
- Sell non-food items like candles, plants and sunscreen rather than cookie dough or pizza

Other successful strategies:

- Add wheat bread and wraps to deli options
- Decrease sugar by offering pop-tarts and sugared cereals less frequently
- Change the set up of the lunch line so that healthier options are placed first
- Offer breakfast in the classroom one day per month or more
- Offer healthy snacks at evening events
- Offer recess before lunch

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Before/After School Programs

- Add an after-school program for volleyball, cheerleading, basketball, or floor hockey
- Have open gym before school

Recess/Mileage Clubs

- Add an additional recess period to the weekly schedule
- Increase recess time by 5 minutes
- Start or expand a walking program/mileage club and offer incentives
- Buy equipment for the playground that promotes physical activity for all students
- Allow students to skateboard or rollerblade at lunch
- Add a walking trail to the playground

Improve Physical Education (PE):

- Implement a PE program and hire PE certified teachers
- Increase PE class by a few minutes; or increase the number of times PE is offered per week
- Introduce nutrition education information into PE curriculum

"We put woodchips down for an outside track for walking; pedometers were given to 3rd & 4th graders"



Add More Physical Activity to the Classroom

- Include a few minutes of teacher-led stretching in the morning and afternoon
- Schedule time when students spend 10 minutes exercising or playing active games
- Do morning warm up exercises that can be led over the school announcement system
- Use Brain Breaks ★
- Try a new classroom physical activity for 5-10 minutes each week (stretching, arm circles)
- Implement "Drop Everything and Walk" (DEAW)

Other Successful Strategies:

- Allow students to ride bikes to school and offer a bike safety program
- Purchase bike racks
- Purchase more PE equipment that supports leisure time physical activity
- Use heart rate monitors in PE class
- Implement school wide student pedometer activities
- Encourage students to walk to school

IMPROVE CLASSROOM NUTRITION EDUCATION

- Integrate taste testing into classroom nutrition lessons with assistance from school food service staff
- Purchase nutrition education resources for the school nurse
- Use a software program to analyze students' diets during health education class
- Encourage collaboration between food service staff and health education teacher
- Have a Reading, Feeding and Fitness Night for students and families to integrate reading and taste testing with physical activity
- Start a hand washing campaign and place liquid sanitizer in each classroom for student use
- Ask food service to coordinate the lunch menu with related classroom activities, eg. blueberries on the day teachers read *Blueberries for Sale* or *I Eat Fruit*
- Have parents come in once a week to read books with positive nutrition messages to the students
- Enroll in Team Nutrition ★; your school will receive free resources



HEALTHY FOOD IN THE CLASSROOMS

- Educate parents on what is a healthy snack
- Provide a list of affordable healthy snacks to families
- Encourage teachers to have healthy choices at classroom celebrations/parties
- Give a healthy snack presentation at kindergarten parent orientation

STUDENT REWARDS

- Use pencils, stickers, erasers and other non-food items as rewards
- Discourage the use of candy/unhealthy food as reward for good behavior or academic achievement
- Reward children with additional physical activity time rather than sugary snacks
- Use the Michigan Team Nutrition ★ handout, *Alternatives To Using Food as a Reward*; for suggestions on how to stop rewarding kids with treats

STAFF WELLNESS

- Offer an employee-smoking cessation program
- Secure reduced membership fees for staff at area fitness center
- Offer pedometers to staff and invite them to walk with students if you have a mileage club
- Offer health screenings for staff
- Offer a Weight Watchers class at your school and ask the PTA/PTO to pay part of the cost
- Ask teachers to eat and drink healthy items in front of students
- Take walking meetings
- Survey staff on wellness needs and interests
- Have healthy food options at staff meetings

OTHER CREATIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

- Adopt a 24-7 “no smoking” policy and make your school or whole district smoke free
- Form a Student Nutrition Advisory Committee
- Develop a Safe Routes to School initiative ★
- Promote health resources that support healthy behavior
- Link your Coordinated School Health Team to your District Wellness Team
- Have a district-wide wellness day and promote opportunities
- Have students develop a fitness newsletter for parents
- Promote healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco-free living and opportunities each month

RESOURCES

- ★ MichiganHealth Tools: <http://www.mihealthtools.org>
- ★ Michigan Team Nutrition: <http://www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/>
- ★ Brain Breaks: <http://www.emc.cmich.edu/BrainBreaks/default.htm>
- ★ Safe Routes 2 School: <http://www.michiganfitness.org>

TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT:

Lisa Grost (MDCH)

grostl@michigan.gov Phone: 517-335-9781
OR

Nick Drzal (MDE)

drzaln@michigan.gov Phone: 517-335-1730

Thank you to participating schools!

Allegan

- Saugatuck Jr./Sr. High School

Bay

- Eastside Middle School

Berrien

- Morton Elementary

Calhoun

- Lakeview Middle School

Cass

- Frank Squires Elementary

Delta

- Cameron Elementary

Dickinson

- Iron Mountain High School

Genesee

- Oak Tree Elementary
- Reed Elementary
- Pinehurst Elementary

Grand Traverse

- East Jr. High School

Gratiot

- St. Louis High School

Houghton

- E.B. Holman Elementary

Ingham

- Gardner Middle School

Kent

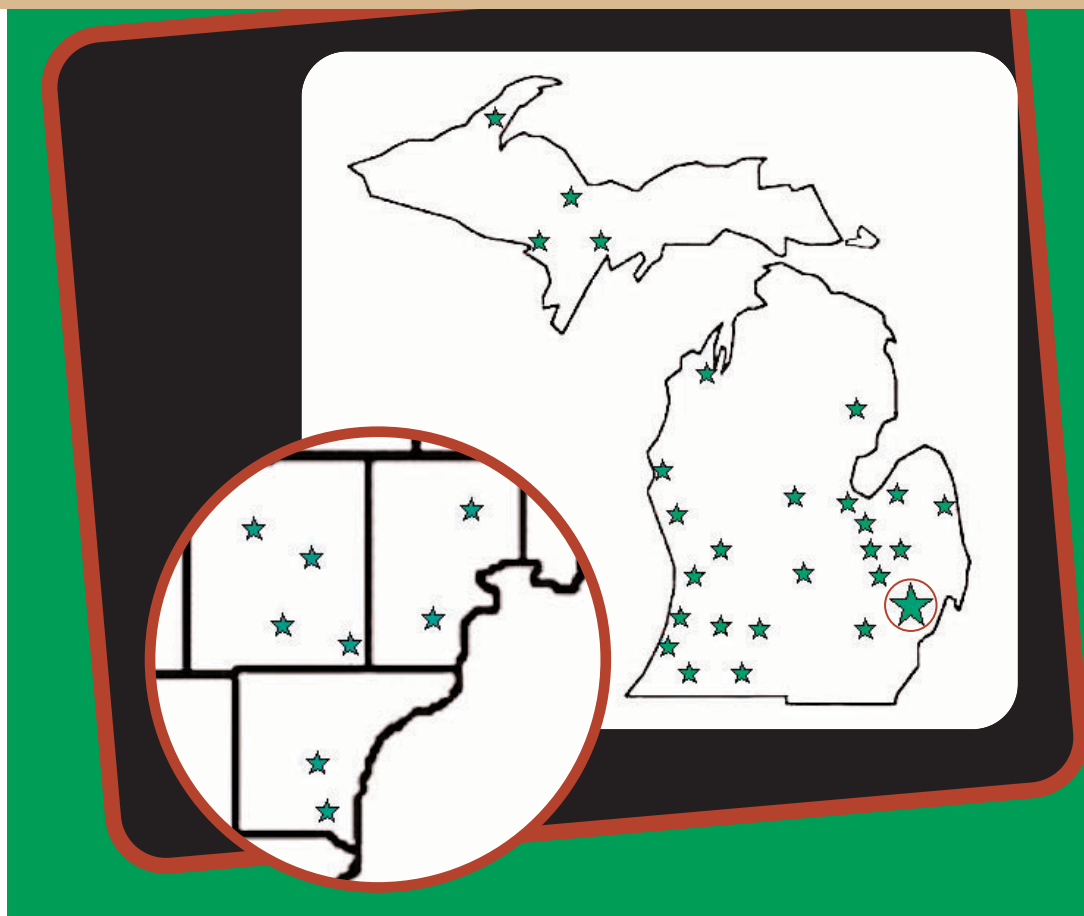
- Ottawa Hills High School
- Central High School

Macomb

- Oakwood Middle School
- Southlake High School

Mason

- Ludington High School



Menominee

- Nah Tah Wahsh Academy

Montcalm

- Lakeville Middle School

Muskegon

- Ellen G. Loftis Elementary

Oakland

- Lessenger Elementary
- Herrington Elementary
- Webster Elementary
- Whitman Elementary
- Will Rogers Elementary

Sanilac

- Sandusky Middle School

St. Joseph

- Centreville Elementary

Tuscola

- Cass City Middle School

Van Buren

- Lincoln Elementary

Wayne

- Botsford Elementary
- Boynton K-8
- Courtis Elementary
- Fleming Elementary
- Guyton Elementary
- William Beckham Academy
- Truman High School

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